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He deals critically with the work and the value of the work done by each explorer along the coast and up the valley, and he follows them to the water-partings between the St. Lawrence and other rivers that go to join the Atlantic to the north or south of the St. Lawrence Basin. This inquiry leads him here and there into portions of the United States.

He deals also with the difficulties presented by the old maps and charts, portions of a number of which are reproduced. Many readers, if they will carefully peruse Chap. I, may derive a more intelligent idea of these old productions, understand their imperfections better, and learn how they may be utilized in some ways. There was room for so excellent a book as this on the exploration of the St. Lawrence Valley.

**Italy. A Popular Account of the Country, its People and its Institutions (including Malta and Sardinia).** By Professor W. Deecke.

With numerous Maps and Illustrations. Translated by H. A. Nesbitt, M.A. London: Swan, Sonnenschein and Co., Ltd. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1904.

As an antidote to the numerous "travel books" on Italy, as well as to those of a more specialised nature, comes this comprehensive and authoritative account of the country, its structure and surface, its resources, and its folk.

Six chapters, about one-fourth of the book, are devoted to the purely physical aspects of the country, the subjects included being Boundaries, Surrounding Seas, Relief, Geological Construction, Hydrography, and Climate. These pages form the backbone of the book, and their careful reading will well repay one who wishes an intelligent foundation for the special line of knowledge of Italy which he is following. Whoever attempts this will be disappointed at the lack of adequate maps in these chapters. This omission is all the more lamentable, as not everyone has a general map of Italy at hand on a large enough scale to enable him to follow the details of relief, construction, and topography here presented. On page 35 the author refers to "the accompanying geological map"; but this has been omitted, at least from the English translation, with great detriment to its usefulness. The introduction of numerous sketch maps and the condensing of certain technical details in Chapters IV and V would have been desirable in view of the popular character of the book.

Especially noticeable in the pages mentioned above is the scant attention the author gives to showing relations between things organic and inorganic—an omission that is surprising in a land where the responses of organic forms to their inorganic environment are so suggestive. It is, however, a satisfaction to note instances in which the correspondence between structure and topography is clearly presented, though these are not as frequent as the recent date of publication would lead us to expect. The following description of the region of the *eocene* marls is illuminating to one who remembers the railway journey from Bologna to Pistoja:

Rounded gentle slopes, deeply cut valleys with broad pebbly bottoms and dirty muddy water, are characteristic marks of the formation. The rock crumbles after a fall of rain; it is completely broken up by frost and thus easily forms landslips—a great danger to roads and railways, and only to be remedied by alteration of route or by thorough drainage. As a rule, nothing grows on these barren slates and clays but scanty grasses, so that extensive tracks lie nearly bare, allowing free play to the rain, which generates flowing waves of mud which from time to time trouble the country near the Bologna Apennines.

And again:

This undermining activity of the Apennine rivers is a constant source of danger to all bridges, as walls

of even deep foundation are found insufficient, the supports being carried away from behind or from below. Train traffic is constantly being interrupted in the spring, and for the most part in consequence of the threatened fall of a bridge, or of inroads of mud. In the Apennines near Modena there have been counted during the last three hundred years forty-three large mountain slides of the soaked *eocene* marls and the chalk or the *pliocene* clays and sands.

In the chapter on hydrography the author writes with constant reference to the human activities so long at work in the river valleys and lake basins, and the maps and diagrams are many and excellent. He takes up the characteristics of the rivers of different sections as they are influenced by length and direction of slope and the nature of the underlying rock, contrasts the Alpine and Apennine Rivers, tells of the recent changes in the Upper Arno and the swings of the Volturro, and describes in detail the delta of the Po and Adige, with the vigilant control exercised by man upon their inundating floods of waste. It is amusing, however, to come upon such archaic geographical expressions as "the Arno *broke through* the chain and created the moist plain of Pisa," and "the Tiber *bursts obliquely* through the Umbrian chain." Such expressions recall "the mighty convulsions of Nature," which used to account some fifty years ago for water gaps and other innocent episodes of a river's history. In spite of the fact that Prof. Deecke has failed to interpret the varied elements of the surface of Italy in the light of the recent progress made by investigators of geography, he has done a good service in these early chapters in putting into compact and readable form a wealth of excellent material, from which the reader may be able to construct the different stages in the development of that Italian landscape which has attracted students of all ages to its interpretation.

A very detailed and lively presentation of the natural resources of Italy and of the way these are turned to the account of profit or loss by the Government and by individuals is given in the chapters on Plants and Animals, Products, Commerce and Manufactures, and Political Institutions, and they form a serious contribution to our knowledge of the country. Readers may not agree with some of the author's views as to the causes and remedies for the evils which exist in Italy to-day, but they will get valuable information as to the economic and social conditions of modern Italy, though the picture would have been truer if more emphasis has been laid on the steady, if slow progress which the nation is making toward higher ideals of self-government and individual responsibility. Among the many excellent descriptions in Chapters VIII and XI may be mentioned those of the olive tree, the wild flowers, the vintage, and the life and surroundings of the miserable charcoal-burners.

By far the longest chapter in the book is that entitled Topography, and there is scarcely a place or district of any importance that is not here described with evident appreciation of the charm that a beautiful setting has lent to the impressive history of this peninsula. It is here that we first find the geology, geography, and history, not treated as isolated phenomena, but woven into a well-presented summary of the separate indictments of the previous pages. It will probably astonish the reader that the author sees in the present aspect of the Forum only "a miniature desert," and in the palaces of the Cæsars "only a dreary, hot, and dirty waste of rubbish"! Opinions differ; they are not conclusions to be verified. The statement, however, that Orbitello is "as unhealthy a town as there can possibly be, almost abandoned in summer on account of fever," cannot be accepted without investigation, since so great an authority on Tuscany as Mr. Carmichael says:

The climate of Orbitello is sweet and healthy. The citizens of Grosseto flock here in the summer months, for their own city has become dangerous.

The author's discriminating account of the varied elements which make up the population, the differences in speech and manners, work and pleasures which these entail, will be read with pleasure and profit. A slight sketch of Italian history and art round out the completeness of this volume.

While the translator has in the main done justice to the author, he must be censured for many awkward sentences, for faulty punctuation, and for numerous errors due, evidently, to careless proofreading. Thus the omission of a cipher in the statement of the capacity of the Coliseum reduces it to about the size of the Mormon Tabernacle; Monte Mario masquerades as Monte *Maria*; the genitive of Nerva is written *Nerviae*, possibly to conform to *Trajani* and *Augusti*, which precede it; *east* and *west* are several times confused, and there is more than one instance where reference is made to a wrong page. The familiar line of Horace is printed on p. 387: *Vides ut alte stet nive candidum.* It is useless to speculate on who is to blame for the remarkable use of the apostrophe in the title on the cover. The printer's devil does not work in refined gold or he might be the scapegoat; perhaps, as the book bears the imprint of a London house, it is an Anglicism not current in America.

The latter half of the volume abounds in full-page illustrations, many of which are printed from recent cuts and are clear and satisfactory, and the numerous sketch maps in the last chapter do good service in expounding the text. There is a good index, some interesting tables of statistics, and an excellent summary of the essentials the author has tried to emphasize. The book deserves to win a place as a valuable all-round authority on Italy.

C. W. H.

**Vorläufiger Bericht über eine in den Jahren 1902 and 1903 aus geführte Forschungsreise in den zentralen Tian-Schan. Von Dr. Gottfried Merzbacher.** Gotha, Justus Perthes. 1904. (P. M. E. Nr. 149.)

The author's explorations in the Central Tian-Shan have enriched our knowledge of that region with a considerable number of most important facts. In the first place must be mentioned his search for the Khan Tengri Mountain, which has resulted in his ascertaining, for the first time, the actual location of the dominating peak of the Tian-Shan. It differs quite considerably from that assumed by former visitors of the country, and even from the data of the official Russian 40-verst survey map. The author's experiences in trying to get near the mountain furnish in themselves the best explanation why such an important question could remain undecided so long. The peak of Khan Tengri, even in an environment of other peaks about 20,000 feet high, rises so high above all of them (about 3,000 feet) that its characteristic outline appears at the background of almost every valley or glacier in that region, and seems to be the culminating-point of each succeeding range of mountains which one approaches. The author realized that only one who had actually stood at the base of the mountain would be able to say where it is, and therefore resolved to use the means of Alpine sport for the service of science, and, with two Tyrolese guides, climbed over one range after the other, and across one glacier after the other, until the goal was reached. The story of this search for the enchanted mountain which seems to be everywhere and nowhere is one of the most fascinating chapters of geographic exploration. It was found that Khan Tengri is not, as has generally been supposed, the central knot from which the ranges of central Tian-Shan radiate. It rises from a secondary ridge which branches off from the main range at about the place